

## **Shaping sustainable and green tourism through circular economy approach**

**Prof Dr. Jennifer Chan Kim Lian**

Keynote speaker at the International Heritage and Cultural Conservation Conference (InHERIT2023) ,16-18 August 2023, University of Technology Sarawak (UTS), Sibu, Sarawak, Malaysia

### **Abstract**

Tourism remains highly susceptible to external changes, relying heavily on the delicate balance of the destination's natural resources. The far-reaching effects of climate change, disease outbreaks and various crises and safety issues have significantly influenced and transformed the landscape of tourism business in unsustainable manner. Therefore, it is imperative to seek new perspectives in the management and operation of tourism activities in a more sustainable manner.

The presentation offers fresh insights and proposes an alternative approach to promoting sustainable tourism, one that aligns with both principle of sustainable pillars -economy, environment and social and the principle of the circular economy. By implementing responsible practices and embracing sustainable and circular approaches, the tourism industry can thrive while preserving the environment and enhancing the overall experiences for both travellers and local communities.

Sustainable tourism is built upon the foundation of sustainability, encompassing three pillars-economy, environment, and social aspects. However, the real realization of long -term sustainable growth for tourism relies heavily on the adoption of responsible practices and the concept of the circular economy. The responsible tourism framework and circular economy play pivotal roles in thrive sustainable tourism, as they can be effectively integrated within the dimensions of sustainable tourism practices. Simply put, the circular economy is akin to natural ecosystems, promotion restoration and waste reduction, guided by principles like reuse, repair, sharing and pay-for-use. These principles form the bedrock of sustainability for tourism businesses. The interconnection between the sustainability pillars, the concept of circular economy, and responsible tourism practices culminates the realization of green tourism. This, in turn, calls for a comprehensive research agenda to delve deeper into these areas. Exploring these interconnected aspects can pave the way for a more holistic understanding and advancement of sustainable practices in the tourism industry.

Key words: sustainable and green tourism, sustainable pillars, circular economy.